



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS
EXECUTIVE

DANIEL H. KRICHBAUM,
PhD
DIRECTOR

Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan
Grand Valley State University/Holland Campus
515 South Waverly
Holland, Michigan 49423

May 3, 2013
Meeting Minutes No. 289

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairperson Gil Guzman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioners Present: Gil Guzman, Gilberto Guevara, Norma Huizar, Jesse Venegas, Raquel Castaneda-Lopez, , Carlos Sanchez, Olga Hernandez-Patino, George Fierro, Carlos Alvarado, Julio Morales

Excused Absence: Noel Garcia, Jr. (personal commitment/moving),
Melissa Fernandez (work commitment), Maria Oxholm work commitment),
JoAnn Chavez (sick)

Staff Present: Marylou Mason, Victoria Garcia-Martin

II. Introduction of Commissioners

Chairman Guzman asked Commissioners and staff to introduce themselves.

III. Welcoming Remarks

Chairman Gil Guzman thanked the community for coming to the meeting.

IV. Approval of Absences: Commissioners absent: Maria Oxholm-work commitment, Melissa Fernandez-work commitment, JoAnn Chavez-ill, Noel Garcia-personal commitment/moving.

MOTION: Commissioner Fierro moved to accept the absences of Commissioners Oxholm, Fernandez, Chavez and Garcia. Motion supported by Commissioner Hernandez-Patino. Motion carried.

V. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Commissioner Sanchez moved to accept the agenda of May 3, 2013. Chairman Guzman stated he would like to add "Strategic Planning" to the agenda under Old Business. No further discussion. Commissioner Huizar supported the motion. Motion carried.

V. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Fierro moved to accept the minutes of January 18, 2013 and March 1, 2013. Commissioner Alvarado commented on statements that were made at the March 1st meeting by Commission Liaison Mary McLellan. He stated some of what she discussed didn't make sense and that it she spoke for a very long time.

Ms. Mason explained who Ms. McLellan was and that she was supposed to speak on Global Michigan and the Cultural Ambassador Program. Ms. McLellan said some offensive comments and the community reacted to those comments. The minutes reflected her comments verbatim in order to capture what was said.

Commissioner Guevara who chaired the March Meeting commented that you cannot control what people say at meetings. We gave her the opportunity to speak as a courtesy as she is the Commission's liaison. He further commented that the executive committee met with the Director of the Dept. of Civil Rights to express that the comments made were inappropriate. The Director stated he would look into the matter.

Commissioner Venegas asked if the Commission would continue to have speakers at meetings.

Chairman Guzman responded that it's always been this Commission's procedure to allow the community or individuals to be put on the agenda or address the Commission during Public Forum.

Commissioner Venegas then asked if we should request the speaker provide us with a written statement before the meeting so we don't end up with this situation again.

Director Mason stated this type of occurrence rarely happens and this is a person from the Dept. of Civil Rights. Ms. McLellan did indicate she was there on behalf of the Dept. of Civil Rights and the Governor's Office. Ms. McLellan did tell Ms. Mason what she was going to discuss but she ended up not speaking on that subject at all.

Commissioner Morales commented that although he was not at the March meeting, he had read the minutes. He stated he didn't believe we shouldn't over react to this situation because to his knowledge this is the first time this has ever happened.

Commissioner Fierro agreed by stating that 99% of the time people who present information are just providing information.

Commissioner Guevara supported the motion. Motion carried.

VI. Special Presentation – International Cultural Center of Benton Harbor by Ms. Angelica Gallegos &

Ms. Gallegos presented information on the International Cultural Center of Benton Harbor. The Center was created in response to the increase of Hispanic/Latino students and to provide a contact point for Hispanic/Latino families for processes and programs. The three main goals are: 1) draw more families to the Benton Harbor area, 2) help families to become successful and contributing members of the community, and 3) helps students become globally competent and to address critical challenges of the day.

The center's programming offers: cultural competence, supporting English learner language development and needs, academic support and alignment with the school day, youth development integration, family and community engagement, bilingual GED preparation, basic computer literacy in Spanish, adult and youth soccer sponsorship, parent nights and family engagement activities.

They have two upcoming events; the International Cinco de Mayo celebration on May 8th from 1-3:00pm and International Day event on May 23, 2013.

Ms. Gallegos mentioned that they were looking for a tent sponsor for their event as it is very expensive. Chairman Guzman offered to assist to find funding or a donation to pay for a tent for their event.

Commissioner Castenameda-Lopez inquired as to why they have chosen bilingual education vs. ESL because she knows the bilingual education programs have been cut severely throughout the state.

Ms. Gallegos indicated they were able to fund the program through a grant they applied for.

Commissioner Hernandez-Patino inquired if they had partnerships with any community college or university where they can draw volunteers for tutoring or just helping the program?

Ms. Gallegos stated they have reached out but so far no response.

Ms. Mason offered to be able to assist in putting them in contact with the Mexican Consul's office to assist them with them with establishing a Plaza Comunitaria in their area.

Commissioner Sanchez also stated he would be able to assist in getting a Plaza Comunitaria for their area as well as putting them in contact with the Whirlpool Corporation. Whirlpool is always looking to engage with groups and he has a friend that is a vice president of manufacturing that could assist them.

Ms. Gallegos was very thankful for all the offers of assistance from the Commission.

VII. Public Forum

Magdalena "Maggie" Rivera, School Board Member: Ms. Rivera welcomed and thanked the Commission for coming to Holland. She stated she was recently elected to the Holland School Board. In addition, she is working with the "Holland Latino Round Table" on the agenda for Latinos. She appealed to the Commission to be a lead for the agenda for Latinos.

She also mentioned that LAUP – Latin Americans United for Progress community group is having a fundraiser lunch and invited the Commission.

Erica Rosebrook, Governor's Office of Urban and Metropolitan Initiatives: Ms. Rosebrook welcomed the Commission to Holland. She stated she came to introduce herself and her office to the Commission and also to hear about what the Commission is doing. Her office is a partnership between Gov. Snyder and the Council of Michigan Foundation. This is newly formed and blended office to focus on issues related to cities. This office covers many areas to include; Grand Rapids, Flint, Saginaw, Bay City, Great Lakes Bay area, and Detroit.

Norma Luna: Ms. Luna stated she attended the meeting to encourage the Commission to help push the Board of Education to retain the Arts and Physical Fitness education in schools because it is too important for the students.

Al Serano, Ottawa County Mental Health Board:

Mr. Serano stated he wants the Commission to help push for funding for mental health programs and services. There are few direct services for the developmentally disabled. He stated people with mental health issues are underserved and asked the Commission to lobby for this funding.

VIII. Executive Reports

A. Chairperson's Report:

Chairman Guzman stated since the March meeting, the executive committee has met with the Department Director of Civil Rights and discussed the last commission meeting and some of the comments that were made. He stated he and the Director have had conference calls and are planning on meeting again in the near future to continue these discussions. There are community members that have contacted him requesting a plan of action. Chairman Guzman stated that he and Executive Committee are doing what they can do make sure the issue is dealt with.

B. Executive Director's Report:

Director Mason stated Commissioners have had the opportunity to review her report and she entertained any questions they may have.

Director Mason announced that the highway in Kalamazoo County will be renamed after the officer that was killed in line of duty. The office has contacted Senator Tanya Schumaker's office, who introduced the bill, to rename a portion of the highway after the slain officer. The Office inquired when the dedication ceremony would be so we can present a resolution to the family at the event. Ms. Mason added that Commissioner Sanchez had originally requested that a resolution be prepared for the family.

Ms. Mason reported that MI Hispanic Legislative Advocacy Day that was scheduled for May 23rd was approaching so quickly and very planning had been made, the Legislative and Civic Engagement Committee decided to reschedule the event for the fall for September 26th. She added that the office will attempt to schedule the Student Summit the day before or after to lessen travel for Commissioners. The Office will be checking the US Hispanic Leadership's schedule for the end of September to ensure they are available. Ms. Mason stated we need sponsors for busses as last year that is what prohibited many schools from participating. The Office will contact the school districts to make sure it's not school count day or have any professional development day scheduled. As soon as a location is obtained for the Summit, we will send notice to the schools so they can put the Summit date on their calendars. Commissioners asked if the Summit can be Sept. 26 and Advocacy Day on Sept. 25th. The office will check with the capital staff.

Commissioner Morales commented that he is not available to participate on September 26 as he has a work commitment.

MOTION: Commissioner Castaneda-Lopez moved to approve the change in dates for the Hispanic Education Summit and Hispanic Advocacy Day to September 25-26, 2013, Advocacy Day on Sept. 25 and Education Summit on Sept. 26, providing the Capital is available. Ms. Mason reminded Commissioners the need to plan for the Hispanic Heritage Month Recognition/Cesar Chavez Dinner as well. After further discussion, it was decided to have the Recognition Dinner the evening of Sept. 25th to increase participation and lessen travel. Commissioner Castaneda-Lopez inquired about holding the Dinner at the end of the year vs. holding it all together. Ms. Mason stated it was a funding issue. It's very difficult to fundraise for multiple events in this economy. Commissioner Venegas state we may want to consider spreading events out for 2014. Commissioner Morales supported the motion. Motion carried.

MOTION: Commissioner Fierro moved to accept the executive reports. Commissioner Hernandez-Patino supported the motion. Motion carried.

IX. Committee Reports:

- A. Economic Development/Agriculture: Commissioner Sanchez reported that the committee met by conference call. He passed out a written report to all Commissioners. He stated the committee has developed the following action items: 1) develop a comprehensive list of Latino business organizations in the state to timely and effectively communicate from the Commission to the community and vice versa. Enhance relationships with such organizations to increase leverage. 2) Infuse the Commission's 2014 strategic plan with economic development goals and metrics 3) develop a succinct list of economic development priorities in the Latino community to share with the office of the Governor 4) Commission staff to develop a comprehensive list of relevant business events in the state with the help of the committee members. Committee members to attend, as possible, such events on behalf of the commission and report on events, 5) Committee members will discuss a relevant business issue/opportunity at regular committee meetings. Committee will decide to move discussion to the full commission.

Chairman Guzman added he would like to see an agricultural piece added to the goals. He stated there are many Latino owned blueberry and apple nursery and farms. He added Juan Martinez with Michigan State University has a compiled list of both Latino and female owned farms throughout the state.

Commissioner Sanchez agreed this is an important piece to add.

Commissioner Alvarado suggested the Commission seek partnership with the West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce as well as the Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He thought it would be helpful if we attended some of their meetings and exchange some ideas and take a more active role with these organizations.

Chairman Guzman informed him he believes we are already members of those chambers.

- B. Education/Health: Commission Castaneda-Lopez reported the committee met by monthly conference calls. Mr. Adrian Calderon from the US Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI) has also participated on these calls. We will collaborate with USHLI and they will hold workshops and assist with obtaining a national speaker. The full-day event, as previously discussed, will be held on Sept. 26, 2013.

Commissioner Hernandez-Patino added we also need to focus on mental health, as suggested by one of the guests. She also noted we need to advocate on behalf of health related careers to students. There is a shortage of doctors and nurses.

Commissioner Hernandez-Patino and Huizar noted that the Mexican Consul's Office holds Bi-National Health Week in October.

Commissioner Morales stated when we update the handout for Advocacy Day he would like to see a health piece added that is so important to our community.

Commissioner Hernandez-Patino added that she recently visited Puerto Rico and attended a conference where Judge Sotomayor was in attendance. She stated Director Mason has asked her to ask the Judge if she was available to be our speaker for Hispanic Heritage Month. Sadly Judge Sotomayor indicated that September through November are her busiest times on the Supreme Court but she was honored we asked her. Judge Sotomayor was there visiting for the presentation of her new book and while in Puerto Rico she visited with every single college and university. Her story is one of hope and that education is the key for a better life. Her life really shows how much trouble she was able to overcome and how successful she's become with the help of so many.

- C. Legislative & Civic Engagement: Commissioner Alvarado reported this committee is in the rebuilding stage and will be meeting the first time soon with a regular schedule monthly conference calls. This committee will be focusing on Advocacy Day, the handouts, outreach, and how the day will flow. He stated the committee would like to be a more vibrant presence for more than one day at the legislative level; but to be a resource to the legislators that don't even know we exist.

Commissioner Fierro stated they previously discussed getting a meeting with the Governor to discuss the successes that the Commission has accomplished the last few years and present some more recent issues.

Director Mason stated the Asian Pacific Commission did a needs assessment report for their community. Ms. Mason spoke to the person who prepared the report and how they compiled the information. She recommended that perhaps the Commission needs to do the same with the assistance of the Julian Samora Research Institute and this report could be presented to the legislators for MI Hispanic Legislative Advocacy Day.

Commissioner Hernandez-Patino inquired if they collected statewide data for the report. Ms. Mason replied that they started in the western part of the state. She added we could start in the Detroit area and the add other sections of the state.

MOTION: Commissioner Fierro moved to accept Committee Reports. Commissioner Guevara supported the motion. Motion carried.

X. Old Business:

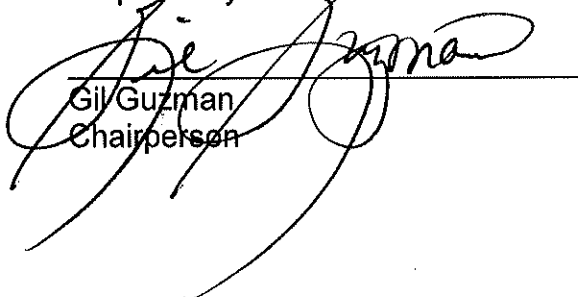
- A. Detroit Immigration Forum – Chairman Guzman thanked Commissioner Castaneda-Lopez, Guevara, Alvarado, Huizar, and Venegas, as well as staff, for representing the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan at the April 25th Detroit Immigration Forum we held along with the Asian Pacific American Commission. It was a successful event with 42 individuals, plus speakers and staff, in attendance. Commissioner Alvarado was a member of the panel of speakers. Commissioner Venegas assisted us with getting the food from a Detroit vendor.
- B. Street Beat Cable Program – Commissioner Alvarado was invited to be a guest on the Detroit radio program “Street Beat” to discuss the current Immigration bill status and about the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan. The show will air on June 2, 2013 at 11:00am, CBS.
- C. Strategic Plan – Director Mason reminded Commissioners that the Strategic Planning Session will held following the October Commission Meeting in October in Adrian, from 1:00-5:00pm.
- D. Commissioner Castaneda-Lopez stated she is still waiting on a copy of a document regarding the Michigan Immigration Clerical Act that was introduced by former State Rep. Steve Tobocman in the early 2000’s. She indicated the bill has been revamped and a letter is being drafted by the Immigration group led by Susan Reed. Commissioner Castaneda-Lopez will update the Commission when she receives a copy of the letter.

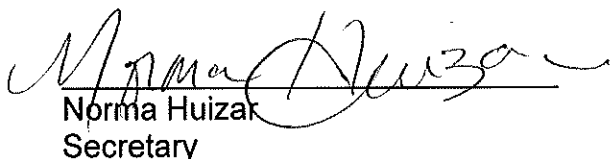
XI. New Business:

- 1) Chairman Guzman would like the Director to investigate the possible of having an immigration forum on the west part of the state. Also to see if the Asian Pacific American Commission is interested in partnering with us on this venture.
- 2) Next meeting, June 13-14 @ 10:00am, Ludington, hosted by Commissioner Alvarado
- 3)

Meeting adjourned at 12:17p.m.

Prepared by Commission staff:


Gil Guzman
Chairperson


Norma Huizar
Secretary

6-14-13
Date

6/14/13
Date